

Vaccine Update

October 18, 2006

To: SSV Provider Sites

Re: State-Supplied Influenza Vaccine Q&A

Pediatric Influenza Vaccine Update

When will we be able to get our pediatric influenza vaccine orders?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), vaccine is being distributed to states in phases. This means the distribution to health care providers will be staggered based on shipments received from the manufacturers.

CDC assures us that we will receive about 50% of our total pediatric vaccine during the month of October. We will receive the remaining doses over the next few months. This will support ongoing vaccination in October, November, and beyond.

Is there enough injectable pediatric influenza vaccine?

The total amount of injectable vaccine for 3 to 18 year olds is limited. For this reason, Flumist should be used for healthy children 5-18 years of age. The injectable product should be reserved for children unable to use Flumist.

When does the influenza season peak in the Northeast?

CDC is urging providers to make significant efforts to offer influenza immunization into January and beyond. This is consistent with the most recent Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations for use of influenza vaccine.

Vaccinating beyond November is important and beneficial because the peak of influenza disease typically occurs in February or later. Additionally, even when disease is present in a community, individuals may still benefit from vaccination.

Will the state reimburse me if I purchase influenza vaccine on my own for children in my practice?

No. Our immunization funding sources (grant, legislative) do not allow for individual reimbursement.

Questions about vaccine distribution: contact Mark Francesconi at 222-5988 or mark.francesconi@health.ri.gov.

Use of Flumist

Flumist is a Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV) and is readily available. We recommend that providers use Flumist (LAIV) for healthy children 5 -18 years of age for the following reasons:

- This will allow available supplies of injectable vaccine to be used for children who are not eligible for Flumist (LAIV).
- Vaccinating school-age children (school age children have the highest rates of influenza) helps to prevent the spread of influenza in the community and to further protect those most at risk.

Will the administration fee for FluMist (LAIV) be covered by insurance?

Neighborhood Health, BC/BC of RI, and United will cover the administration fee for children receiving Flumist (LAIV).

The CDC has provided the following answers to commonly asked questions concerning LAIV:

1. Can people receiving the nasal-spray flu vaccine (LAIV) pass the vaccine viruses to others?

In clinical studies, transmission of vaccine viruses to close contacts has occurred only rarely. The current estimated risk of getting infected with vaccine virus after close contact with a person vaccinated with the nasal-spray flu vaccine is low (0.6%-2.4%). Because the viruses are attenuated and cold-adapted, infection is unlikely to result in influenza illness symptoms since the vaccine viruses have not been shown to mutate into typical or naturally occurring influenza viruses.

2. Can contacts of people with weakened immune systems get the nasal-spray flu vaccine (LAIV)?

People who are in contact with others with **severely** weakened immune systems when they are being cared for in a protective environment (for example, people with hematopoietic stem cell transplants), should not get LAIV. **People who have contact with others with lesser degrees of immunosuppression (for example, people with diabetes, people with asthma taking corticosteroids, or people infected with HIV) can get LAIV.**

3. What side effects are associated with the nasal-spray flu vaccine (LAIV)?

In children, side effects can include runny nose, headache, vomiting, muscle aches, and fever. In adults, side effects can include runny nose, headache, sore throat, and cough. Fever is not a common side effect in adults receiving the nasal-spray flu vaccine. For more information visit www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/nasalspray.htm.